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Periodical

MOTOR UNION INSURANCE COMPANY LTD

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DETROIT

PUNCH



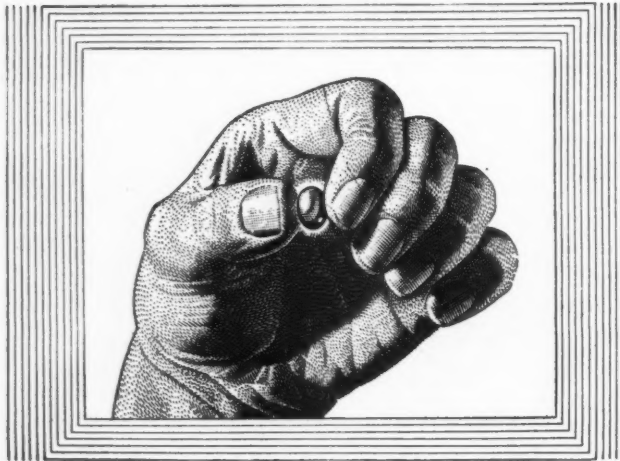
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see bottom of last page of text



Imperial Typewriters

MADE IN
GREAT BRITAIN

RATIONING MAKES EXTRA VITAMIN SUPPLY ESSENTIAL



THE BODY MUST HAVE ENOUGH vitamins A and D if it is to remain healthy. Before rationing most of us got sufficient of these in our ordinary meals, but wartime diets tend to reduce the vitamin value of our food. A daily dose of Crookes' provides

sufficient 'anti-infective' vitamin A to enable you to resist colds and influenza; it provides, too, the correct amount of 'sunshine' vitamin D to keep adults healthy and to allow children to grow up with strong bones and sound teeth.

CROOKES' HALIBUT OIL

OBTAINABLE ONLY FROM CHEMISTS

Capsules—per bottle of 100—8/6 · Liquid—per phial—enough for 16 days 2/-

'Saturday's Child Works Hard'



Monday's child is fair of face
Tuesday's child is full of grace
Wednesday's child is full of woe
Thursday's child has far to go
Friday's child is loving and giving
Saturday's child works hard for his living
But the child that is born on the Sabbath day
Is bonny and blithe and good and gay.

S. van Abbé

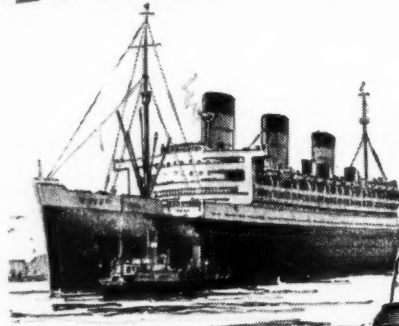
See with what zest he tackles a "man's job"! Such robust health and energy can be developed by wise nutrition. Serve as much Weetabix as you can get—this famous cereal food helps to build the "basis of good health" for life.

Weetabix
MORE than a Breakfast Food

SMALL SIZE
2 POINTS 7½LARGE SIZE
4 POINTS 1/1½

Zoned, like all cereals, but perhaps YOU live in a Weetabix area
WEETABIX LTD., BURTON LATIMER, NORTHANTS

WX53

DEPENDABILITY

R.M.S. "Queen Mary"—second in size only to her sister ship "Queen Elizabeth," can carry 3,200 persons in luxury peace time travel. Four gigantic propellers representing 200,000 horsepower enable this "Queen of the Seas" to cross the Atlantic in under four days—calling to mind what millions throughout the world say of Champion Plugs, "There's Dependability for you!"

CLEAN PLUGS SAVE PETROL AND IMPROVE ENGINE PERFORMANCE



CHAMPION
PLUGS

CHAMPION SPARKING PLUG COMPANY LIMITED

Thanks
to...



1865-1945

The family will appreciate that little addition of LEMCO BEEF EXTRACT. It makes all the difference to your cooking.

LEMCO THE ORIGINAL
Concentrated Beef Extract

One pound of LEMCO contains the concentrated juices of over 30 pounds of prime beef.

— PREPARED BY OXO LIMITED, LONDON —



All over the world this radiant, healthy child is known as the symbol of perfect babyhood—the baby fed on COW & GATE—Britain's premier Milk Food.

When baby is naturally fed, there is no question, no doubt in the minds of the mother, doctor or nurse that baby is having the food Nature intended. Perfectly balanced, exactly suited for baby's digestion from the hour of birth, vital and pure, these are the assured essentials of natural feeding.

The same assurance is yours when doctor prescribes COW & GATE. Years of research have perfected a food that conforms to this "natural" standard that is every baby's right. Completely balanced in itself, exactly proportioned in vitamins and minerals, germ-free in its purity, COW & GATE is the proper food for your baby.

It is the Royal choice for Royal babies!

© 3413

COW & GATE MILK FOOD
Babies Love it!

ah! oh!

SOLO



SOLO
means REAL
ORANGE JUICE

Remember this bottle
—it's the shape of good
things to come back



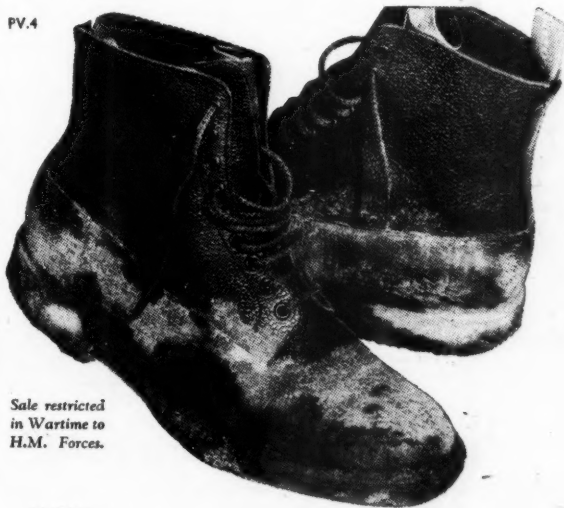
To buy "Utility
by MERIDIAN" is
to have your purchase
backed by a quality
name.

MERIDIAN
UNDERWEAR

The garment illus-
trated is the Meridian
wool - faced ribbed
Knicker which takes
3 coupons.

J. B. LEWIS & SONS, LTD., Nottingham. Est. 1815. Suppliers to the Wholesale Trade

PV.4



Sale restricted
in Wartime to
H.M. Forces.

21/5/41.

Herewith one pair of Lotus Veldtschoen, for repair, which our client purchased from us in 1926. They are still waterproof and strong. Our client (2nd Lt. L.A.A., R.A.), has readily given permission to use this as an advert.

LOTUS
Veldtschoen
GUARANTEED WATERPROOF



Why? Because war conditions restrict supplies of bitter oranges, which prevents the manufacture of "GOLDEN SHRED." Fruit is controlled, but quality cannot be standardised. Robertson's pre-war reputation and skill, coupled with our 80 years' old tradition, still count for a lot.



It's Robertson's
-you can depend on it!



JAMES ROBERTSON AND SONS (P.M.) LTD.
Golden Shred Works
London Paisley Manchester Bristol

DUFRAIS
Special
VINEGARS

Tarragon
Garlic
Chili



Elder
Cider
Eschalot
etc.

Made from Natural Herbs
Matured in Genuine Malt
Vinegar

AND SOLD ONLY IN BOTTLE
DUFRAIS & CO. LTD.
21, St. James Sq., London, S.W.1

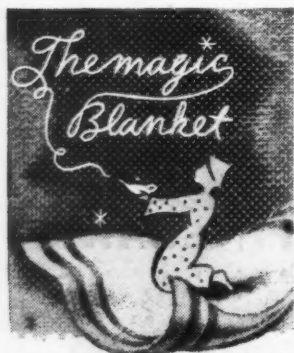
The same quality in greater quantity

WHEN you use

MELTONIAN CREAM for your precious leather footwear, you know you are lengthening its life as well as preserving its smart appearance. Only the finest obtainable raw materials are used in Meltonian, which is why supplies have been short. Quality has never been sacrificed to increase wartime quantity. Now, however, MELTONIAN CREAM is again in good supply. Should you experience any difficulty in obtaining it, please write to us, giving the name of your usual supplier.

MELTONIAN

MELTONIAN LTD., OXGATE LANE,
CRICKLEWOOD, LONDON, N.W.2



IF you had a Magic Lamp, one of your wishes would be for the Home of your Dreams—and "MODERNA" Blankets for all your bedrooms.

All this will one day come true.

We are planning them now—"MODERNA" blankets of softest lamb's wool; in a range of loveliest pastel shades; with uniquely close, warm weave; odourless and unshrinkable.

MODERNA

The Blanket of your Dreams

Supplied only through Retail Stores.

THOMAS RATCLIFFE & CO. LTD.
MYTHOLMROYD, YORKS.

KENT Best British Brushes

The KENT-COSBY (PATENT) "Allure" PERFUME HAIRBRUSH

It's Worth Waiting For!

Wartime Address:—G. B. KENT & SONS LTD., 222 REGENT ST., LONDON, W.1

BRISTLES TAKE OUT TO WASH
HANDLEBACK NEVER SPOILT BY WATER
ABSOLUTE CLEANLINESS AT BRISTLE ROOTS



Something to look forward to!

Mackintosh's

"always in quality street"



QUEUEING for a cold?



Hanging about in the cold, you are grateful for Wool's supreme virtues—its warmth and comfort. In Wool clothing, little pockets of air are held in the loose texture of the fabric keeping out chills and damp. That's one reason why Wool is so beautifully warm.

WOOL

is the word for health.

ISSUED BY THE INTERNATIONAL WOOL SECRETARIAT on behalf of the Wool Producers of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.



The sheer slick smartness of the "ZWOW" man-style pocket is an exclusive feature of all GOR-RAY Skirts. This conveniently positioned, so useful pocket renders the ugly, old-fashioned placket obsolete. A neat waist-fastening supplants bulging hip buttons and metal gadgets and preserves the fashionable svelte hip-line.

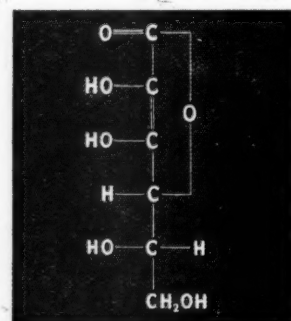
"A GOR-RAY Skirt with its exclusive 'ZWOW' Pocket is an essential to my wardrobe," says Modern Miss.

Good drapers and stores everywhere stock GOR-RAY Skirts with the "ZWOW" Pocket in a variety of styles.

ALL THE BETTER FOR THE "ZWOW" POCKET

LOOK FOR THE GOR-RAY LABEL

Issued by: C. STILLITZ, Royal Leamington Spa.



What does this mean?

No! It is not a modern magic charm; it is simply the chemical formula for Vitamin C. Chemistry is but one of the subjects about which every pharmacist must have a sound knowledge. There are many others in which he must prove himself efficient by examination. This experience is at the disposal of his customers. His judgment on drugs, and toilet products, can be relied upon.

For over 40 years pharmacists have been recommending

Euthymol

TOOTH PASTE

History in the making



32 years

before the building of the Arc de Triomphe in Paris was completed — to commemorate Napoleon's victories — the firm of Seager Evans was founded. With a record of 140 years of fine distilling they still produce the unrivalled

SEAGERS GIN

25/3
Full size
bottle13/3
Half
bottle

EST:

1805



TRADE MARK

Enjoy
Red Hackle
Scotland's Best Whisky
and banish dull care
Hepburn & Ross Kelvinbridge
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★
ASK FOR "GIN
AND ANGOSTURA"
IF YOU WANT
"PINK GIN"



ANGOSTURA
Bitters
AND GIN MAKE
THE ORIGINAL
"PINK GIN"

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You like Biscuits



And so do the youngsters. They will obviously like them even more when Mother can supply those assortments and special kinds that used to be family favourites in the days of peace. Mothers in their wisdom know that energy expended must be replaced, and whether it is work-time or play-time there is nothing quite like a biscuit to fill the need. So remember when you are shopping, that while you like the biscuits, it is equally true that



... they like you!

Issued by the Cakes and Biscuits Manufacturers War Time Alliance Ltd.

CVS-305

An Invitation

THE
PRIME MINISTER
has said:

"We must make exertions to
restore our export trade."

The Midland Bank invites all who are making plans for business with other countries to take advantage now of the Bank's co-operation.

The Overseas Branch of the Bank in London and the Foreign Branches in various provincial centres have a vast fund of information and experience, and through many thousands of banking agents in all parts of the world facilities are available for handling every type of transaction.

The Manager of any of the Bank's 1,800 branches will welcome the opportunity of discussing problems related to foreign trade.

MIDLAND BANK

LIMITED



CRAVEN 'A'

FOR OUR
THROAT'S SAKE

10 for 1'2 20 for 2'4



Carrolls Ltd. — 150 years' Reputation for Quality C.A. 1022

*Get it
at
Harrods*

HARRODS LTD

LONDON SW1

The Rail-way to Victory

The Railways are responsible for getting the raw materials and the workers to the war factories; for carrying the finished products to the ports; for transporting troops and their equipment to points of embarkation. Wise pre-vision and long-term planning in the years before the war prepared the Railways for their great task.

GWR · LMS  LNER · SR

OPTREX

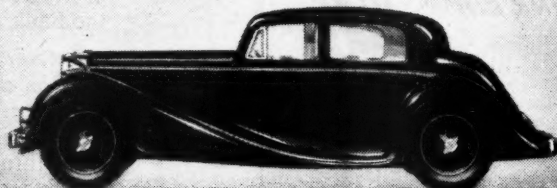
the

eye lotion

Whether you wear glasses or not, you should have your eyes examined at regular intervals by a Qualified Practitioner.

Optrex Ltd., Perivale, Middlesex

Jaguar



*The finest car of its
class in the world*



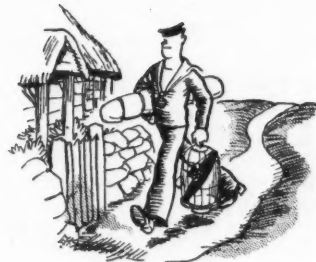
S. S. CARS LTD · COVENTRY



PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCVIII No. 5426

January 17 1945

Charivaria

In view of the more hopeful trends in the war news, the optimists have decided to stand down.

o o

"Germans May Be Leaving Tip," a headline announces. This confirms the rumour that one of their salients was flattened out by a strong Naafi concentration.

o o

Nazi educational authorities are planning changes in the curriculum of German schools. At the moment geography is in a state of flux.

o o

"Every violinist aspires to the Beethoven Violin Concerto," a reviewer declares. Would that pianists did but likewise to the Warsaw ditto.

o o

The war-time bread has recently been made much whiter. Those who prefer a darker colour should choose either wholemeal or sausage.

o o

A man was arrested as he stepped off a main-line train at a London station. Which proves that the police eventually get their man even if he travels by rail.

o o

Business at the January Sales is much restricted, the stores finding that the public has very little to sell.

o o

Rip Van Adjutant

"Mr. R. H. —, formerly deputy adjutant-general at army headquarters, —, has returned to life at —." *N.Z. paper.*

o o

"War-time golf has its peculiar difficulties," says a professional. Which is the correct club to use for driving from amongst the greens?

Further changes are impending in the Japanese government. For some time now its members have been openly baring their teeth at one another.

o o

The Times are Out of Joint.

"When there's a scent of new-mown hay
Then it's spring-time on the farm."

Song in B.B.C. broadcast.

o o

The latest theory concerning Hitler's counter-offensive is that he wanted to go back for his New Order.

o o

It is reported that an American athlete recently ran across country to beat a local train between two stations. How they do hustle over there: in this country he could have walked.

o o

A married correspondent says she hid her earlier love-letters by stuffing a mattress with them. In time the young man's fancies may turn to spring.

o o

"Is the British film-going public becoming more serious-minded?" asks a leading article. Reading from beginning to end of the queue, yes.

o o

Military experts are unanimous that Rundstedt has taken an irrevocable step towards what may be the turning-point of the hinge of the pincers he cannot draw out from or with.

o o

"A woman seated in a crowded railway carriage always looks more comfortable than a man," states a writer. Well, for one thing she can knit herself plenty of elbow-room.



A Great Occasion

THE sound of the rhythmic tramping of many feet aroused me from my day-dreams. I hurried to the window and there, with swinging arms and muscles firm, they strode. The gaze of every marcher was glued firmly to the back of the neck of the marcher in front, and every leg was lifted with the precision of an automaton till the foot was a yard or more from the ground.

Each, in his left hand, carried a stick or an umbrella, and on that day of slushy pavements and lowering skies the spectacle was one to fill the heart with enthusiasm. Old men were amongst them, veterans of bygone campaigns, grizzled and tanned by wind and sun, pale-faced youngsters of the later levies, gaunt women with steely eyes, and maidens lovely as a rose in June.

I knew them. They were marching to Trafalgar Square. They were the serried armies of the Individualists. High above them floated the purple banner embroidered with gold and bearing the motto of the Order, "All for one, and one for all." Perfectly disciplined, they divided into companies, wheeled, halted, turned and faced the plinth. The startled pigeons scattered upwards, the lions lay unmoved. The masked leader arose, and the vast multitude, at the word of command, gave him the Salute of Freedom, in which the right arm is lifted to the level of the shoulder, with the palm of the hand held vertical, and then brought suddenly backwards and pressed over the lower portion of the face.

He began to address them. From my distant station I could only hear snatches of his speech, but from the fact that no murmur arose from the ranks and that every man and woman remained standing to attention, in spite of their obvious colds, I knew well with what reverent attention they were listening to him.

"We must fight not merely in the open, but underground"—"The eyes of England are upon us"—"in this great meeting-place of democracy"—"We are cogs in the vast machine of Individualist Enterprise"—"shoulder to shoulder, and without thought of personal comfort"—"*à bas les Bureaucrats!*"—"the Leader's will is all"—"No Individualist thinks of himself, but of the Party alone"...

These were some of the phrases that filtered through the leaden air and seemed to bring a wan sunlight even to that dreary winter afternoon.

Individualism! How much I prized it! How often had I felt the iron-handed tyranny of the State! Was it too late, I wondered, for me also to join the mighty regiment of Independence and Liberty?

I noticed that men carrying papers and collecting-bags were moving amongst the sightseers behind the demonstration. Hastily, I put on my goloshes, my overcoat, my muffler, my hat. I went out into the street. I encountered a canvasser.

"Enrol me amongst the brethren!" I cried. He looked at me sternly, putting his face close to mine.

"Do you see eye to eye with us?" he asked.

"Eye to eye," said I. "Aye, and nose to nose."

"If you speak truthfully you can be inducted into the brotherhood."

I was ushered into a darkened room, where I took off my coat and rolled up the sleeve of my tattered shirt. A small incision was made in my arm with a sharp knife, and in that of a hooded inquisitor, my blood was smeared on his arm, and his on mine. I repeated the fearful words of the oath.

I swear to obey the lightest command of the Leader, and those who rule under him, without criticism, whatsoever they may ordain, and, if need be, to lay down my life in the Cause. Every act that I do, every word that I speak, shall be done or spoken in the Name of Individualism, and for the sake of Freedom alone.

I was allowed to ask certain questions of a subordinate official of the hierarchy before I was released.

"Who is the Leader?" I asked.

"His name is not revealed," was the answer. "We speak of him in secret as The Autarch."

"And you others?"

"The rest of us have no names. We are numbers."

He told me mine.

"At any hour, any day, you may receive a message in code, telling you of some service you must render, without fail, for Liberty."

"Even if it means—"

"Even if it means imprisonment. There are worse things," he said grimly, "than imprisonment."

I learned then that every Individualist is shadowed night and day by a Fellow Individualist, to see that he has no truck with Bureaucracy and resists, on every occasion, the invidious advances of State Control. I was anxious to know what happened to an Individualist who wavered, or stumbled by the way, and was told that, for a light offence, expulsion with ignominy from the Society was the normal penalty.

"But for a serious lapse from Individualism," I said, and my voice faltered a little.

"You will be taken, at night, to a room at the Headquarters of the Brotherhood, and there a man, whose face you will not see, will leave you alone with a loaded revolver on the table."

I understood (almost at once) the grave implication of the words.

"Is there anything more?" I murmured.

The speaker's face brightened, and he pulled out a fountain pen.

"Your subscription," he said, "to the Cause."

"What happens to the—er—well—to the money?"

"You are not here to ask questions. You are here to obey. Is not every penny spent in fighting the extortions of Bureaucracy in the service of the nation? Don't we send you these pamphlets? Don't we make proselytes? Don't we have to organize?"

I agreed. I filled in the form. I subscribed. Only a little, because I was poor. But I became a blood-brother. I became a secret servant of Liberty. I went out of the room with a feeling of elation, realizing that I was no more a cipher amongst ciphers, but a sworn comrade of the Individualist Co-operative Union.

"All for one," I repeated to myself happily, "and one for all."

And then I remembered suddenly that I had forgotten my number, and given, by some stupid error, a false name and address. But there was an unaccustomed bulge in my waistcoat pocket. I had also forgotten, I remembered, to return the fountain pen.

EVOE.

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



SHUTTING THE DOORS



"How many kilolitres to Battalion H.Q., chum?"

The Signs

THE first hour of my day is the critical time; it is then that I read the Signs. After that, knowing what sort of a day it is going to be, I can adjust the sliding-scale of my resistance. This is the secret of an equable temperament.

The signs are of one sort only—bad. A good day, that is to say, is not heralded by good omens, but only by the absence of the Signs. They do not include really abnormal pieces of shocking bad luck, like falling downstairs and breaking a leg; such an outlandish occurrence could never penetrate into the inner character of a day; it would merely attach itself to the day's outer framework, leaving it shaped just as usual—oblong, that is, with a line across the middle for lunch.

No, the Signs are quite small. They pit and chip and pock a day out of all recognition, warping its rectangles and

shaving unsymmetrical lumps off its corners. That is what resistance is needed for—to fill up the holes and force the lines back into position; a sort of moral rolling-pin, so that the ravages are repaired as you go along, and when the day is over you can leave it flat and smooth on the pastry-board just as if it had been a good day after all.

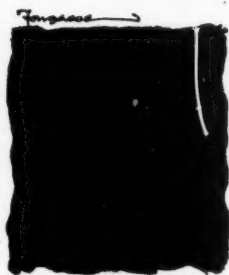
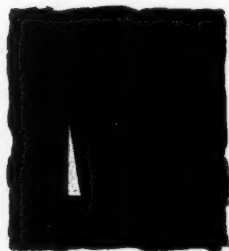
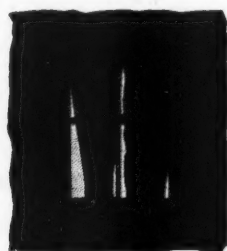
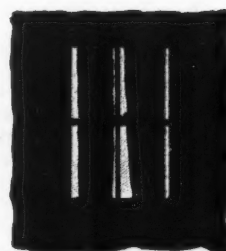
Take to-day. I had a Sign as soon as I woke up. I misjudged the distance, reaching for my morning tea, and tiddly-winked the cold spoon down inside my pyjama jacket. I will not say that I knew at once what sort of a day it was going to be, but from that moment I was watchful. When the bathroom bulb fused fifteen minutes later, just as I had dropped my towel behind the bath in a spot from which it only proved to be recoverable from a prone position on the wet linoleum, I

began to be strongly suspicious. Stepping on to the cat on my way out of the house and falling with my face in the hedge would, you might think, have made up my mind for me; but I always regard the buses as a deciding factor. They run past the top of my road at five-minute intervals: but this morning, there they were, three of them, nose to tail, disappearing in the direction of the station.

Now, let me make a point here. To some it may seem that the Signs should be treated with contempt. No greater mistake could be made. Disregard of clear warnings has brought many a man, not to say a nation, within measurable distance of ruin. The thing to do is to step up one's resistance, adjust the sliding-scale, otherwise the nervous system is unable to withstand the buffetings to come.

I stepped up my resistance. It was

THE CHANGING DIM-OUT OF BRITAIN

*First fortnight—**Second fortnight—**Third fortnight—**Fourth fortnight—*

no surprise to me that I should half kick the sole off my shoe against an irregular paving-stone, that two nonagenarian ladies should precede me down the steps of the Underground with such deliberation that it only needed the man at the barrier to demand to see my season-ticket—a bi-annual occurrence—for me to lose my train by the length of an umbrella. It was a mere nothing when, having slept two stations past my own, I hurriedly picked up my unfastened brief-case by the bottom, so that its contents slid smoothly out all over the compartment floor, a child's spelling book, forgetfully undelivered at home, prominently uppermost. Even when I found I had only one glove I merely shrugged. I knew what to expect. I had read the Signs. I stepped up my resistance.

How angry any other man would be, I thought in the office, upon noticing that he had torn up the fair copy of his "Monthly Report, Survey and Statistics" instead of the rough draft! Why, some people would have stamped about the room, cursing and making themselves hot and uncomfortable. But not I. I swivelled my swivel chair round to my typing table and just typed the thing out afresh, then I tore up the fair copy again. I was nonchalant about the whole thing, even when the string of my typewriter-rubber cleverly fastened itself round the back of my chair, so that when I swivelled back again I dragged the typewriter on to the floor and broke the heads off six of the hammers. No, far from getting angry, I became increasingly complacent. I had read the Signs. Nothing could take me by surprise.

The bills that came by the afternoon post were like water off a duck's back; when the Principal sent for me to say that he could not consider my application for a rise in salary I smiled a

perfectly genuine smile. I wanted to console him for having to break the news, to tell him that I had expected nothing different. As I closed his door behind me I even thrust out my hand backwards to prevent it from slamming, not even murmuring when my index finger slipped unerringly into the hinge, so that the door closed with nothing more disturbing than a subdued crunch.

Stumbling along through the tunnel, forsaking the broken-down train without reluctance (for I had been sitting opposite a drunken artisan who had boisterously claimed to be my brother from the Bahamas and had, as I found later, dropped a smouldering cigar-butt into the pocket of my new overcoat) I thought once more what heart-aches a man is spared who can read the Signs. What a day it would have been, I pondered, as I afterwards walked home in the wake of the last bus, for any other man, yet here was I, at the end of it all, as bright and buoyant as could be!

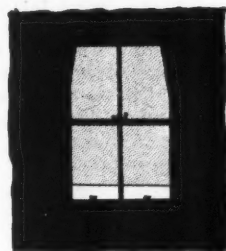
Even when I remembered my wife was away for the night, and found that I had left my keys on the dressing-table, I merely shrugged and stepped up what remained of my resistance. Then I got the axe from the coal-house and chopped the front door down.

J. B. B.

o o

Admonition

Auntie slipped up on some rind,
And her ankle's wonky,
Uncle;
Really, you were most unkind,
Calling her a "donkey,"
Uncle;
Names like "donkey" rankle,
Uncle,
With a wonky ankle,
Uncle!

*Fifth fortnight—**Sixth fortnight—**Seventh fortnight—**Eighth fortnight.*

At the Pictures

REAL PEOPLE

ANY film biography of a remarkable man will, we know, always be ill-balanced, incomplete and over-simplified; because the audience is assumed, perhaps correctly, to be incapable of grasping or being interested in the qualities that made the man remarkable and is therefore shown a disproportionate number of the attributes and experiences in which he resembled a great many other people. The aim of the average film biography seems, in fact, to approximate to the aim of most other films: to show an ordinary person, like you and me in the audience, who by the whim of fate has a lot of unusual adventures. Thus in spite of ALEXANDER KNOX's interesting and intelligent performance as *Wilson* (Director: HENRY KING), the film presents not the professor of political economy, the intellectual statesman, the authority on government, but a family man with a passion for sing-songs round the piano, from which he is continually being dragged away by irksome (and to the audience, it is supposed, much less interesting) interruptions. When the interruptions are impossible to ignore, when the story has to deal with them for the sake of the structure of fact, then we get the over-simplification: *Wilson*, being the hero of the picture, has to dominate all his scenes—a necessity that gives an inaccurate emphasis, to put it mildly, to such occasions as the brief caricature of the 1919 Peace Conference.

The film—an account of *Wilson's* career from his first campaign for Governor of New Jersey to his leaving the White House for the last time—is sumptuously and well done in Technicolor, but it seems too long, and the best, liveliest and most actively entertaining sequences come early. It is fascinating to watch and listen to the highly-coloured activities of American local and national politics: the roaring scenes at the Democratic Convention are brilliantly done. Considered as entertainment,

the well-bred undertones and half-lights of the Presidential routine are nothing to them. Mr. KNOX delivers *Wilson's* speeches impressively well, and the message of the picture—a very emphatic declaration that the aloofness of the U.S. was to blame for the failure of the League of Nations—is driven home hard, but the last part of

the piece is not without tedium. I am glad to have seen it: it is worth seeing as an enormous expensive curiosity, and many small isolated parts of it are worth seeing for themselves alone; but the early, noisy campaign scenes are the only ones I should make the slightest effort to see again.



J.H.D.

[Wilson]

SPEECH DAY

President Wilson ALEXANDER KNOX



J.H.D.W.D.

[Dark Waters]

HIDE AND SEEK

| | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Cleeve | ELISHA COOK, JNR. |
| Mr. Sydney | THOMAS MITCHELL |
| Leslie | MERLE OBERON |
| Dr. Grover | FRANCHOT TONE |

Real people and real events, again, in *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo* (Director: MERVYN LEROY); but the facts being very much simpler and easier to grasp than those in *Wilson*, this film conveys them (I imagine) much more accurately. It leads up to and is built round the half-minute mentioned in the title, the half-minute in April 1942, when American planes first bombed Tokyo; much of it is devoted to an almost documentary-style exposition of the previous training the airmen received, but too much more of it is devoted to the love-story of one of the pilots. The argument was perhaps that this, being the only "romance" in the picture, had to be overpoweringly sweet and tender because it was representing the "romances" of all the men concerned, but the result is not happy. Almost every time we see PHYLLIS THAXTER she is narrowing her eyes and radiating such an intensity of wifely love as seems calculated to fill the cinema with steam. The raid itself is exciting and wonderfully well reproduced. SPENCER TRACY appears as *General* (then Lt.-Col.) *Doolittle*, and has little to do but make stern speeches.

Dark Waters (Director: ANDRÉ DE TOTH), an intelligently-made thriller, is based on the old but always effective idea of the villain who sets out for some reason to drive a young woman mad. In this instance it is *Mr. Sydney* (THOMAS MITCHELL) who has designs on the sanity of *Leslie Calvin* (MERLE OBERON), and he is very greatly helped in making her uneasy by the local scenery: most of the action is in and around an old house in the bayou country of Louisiana. No less usual climax for this could be managed than the familiar suspense-ridden chase in the dark, but there too the bayous (and the quicksands) help. R. M.

News from Belgium

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I should like to tell you the story of Hendvik, an inhabitant of Antwerp, as it was told me by his cousin Jan, a Belgian pilot, while he was bringing the ship up the Scheldt. Jan says Hendvik should not be considered as typical, but that there are Hendviks everywhere.

Hendvik stayed on in Antwerp after May 1940. Jan says that now he explains it by saying his cycle was punctured, but the truth probably is that Hendvik thought all those stories about the Germans were exaggerated—and, in any case, who would look after his five barges?

At first Hendvik had no complaints. The Germans were very correct, and although they requisitioned his barges, they paid for them. At least, they gave him pieces of paper which Hendvik could change into money, and if he did not always get face value on the exchange, well, had he not overcharged the Germans with that very contingency in mind? So he had the satisfaction of feeling an astute man of affairs, as well as getting a fair rent.

All went well until the R.A.F. sank one of the barges. That made Hendvik very angry. It is too bad, he used to say, that the Allies do not respect the property of those who are, *au fond*, wholeheartedly with them. That was not war; it was carelessness. Worse still, the Germans refused to pay compensation for the barge, although it had been carrying spare motor parts for them at the time, and Hendvik became as angry with the Germans as he was with the R.A.F. What kind of a war is this, he said, when both sides cease to be interested in private property, my private property, that is?

Vegetables became rather short and anything like an adequate supply could only be got by going to the farmers in the Black Market; and Hendvik became very angry with the farmers too, for what was the good of keeping back vegetables from the Germans if all they did with them was to sell them at inflated prices to their fellow-countrymen? If Hendvik hadn't had money from his barges he might have been very hungry, and where would the farmers be if no one could afford their prices? Looking pretty silly, Hendvik implied.

But the war interfered more and more. The Belgian Resistance Movement sank another barge (largely by

accident, when they were blowing up a lock-gate) and Hendvik added them to the list. It was intolerable, this uncertainty, this contempt for normal business. There were times when Hendvik despaired of the future of normal business.

After that Hendvik himself became involved in the Resistance Movement. Another Scheldt pilot, a Dutchman, appeared one night and said he was being very closely watched and his only chance of escape was to hide somewhere quite new. Hendvik hid the man for a couple of months and then smuggled him away from Antwerp on one of the three barges left. After all, he had known the man for years. Hendvik was by now feeling extremely angry. Was he to risk his neck to hide a Dutchman, of all people? And it was not as though he trusted even the Russians either. It looked as though they were quite as capable of sinking one of his barges, if it happened to stray into Eastern Germany, with as little thought for the owner as any of the other Allies.

The Winter Comes.

THE Winter comes, as come it must.

Our simple sailors put their trust
Not only in their daily tot
Of Navy rum to keep them hot,
Nor wholly in the morning gin
To hold the central heating in.
Though alcohol procures a glow
Does it rebuff the ice or snow?
Can artificial stimulants
Compete with heavy under-pants?
The answer's in the negative.
It's only woollen goods that give
Complete protection (which they need)

To naval ratings (Nelson's breed).

So up, ye knitters! Up, and knit
A scarf, some gloves (and see they fit),

Sea-boot stockings, helmets, too,
As long as they're in Navy blue.
But if you lack the wool, or skill,
Please write a largish cheque and fill

It in to PUNCH'S COMFORTS FUND;

Address it "Bouverie St., London, E.C.4." And may we plead
That he gives twice who gives
with speed?

Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940

By now, one of the three remaining barges had been damaged by the Americans during a raid on a motor factory in Antwerp docks. Apart from the French (whom Hendvik, as a Fleming, suspected) there was now no one for whom Hendvik could bear any feelings of friendship.

It was then that he conceived his grand plan. It was becoming more and more obvious that the Germans would be driven out of Belgium and that the British and Americans would come to Antwerp again. And there was one thing common to all soldiers. They all wanted cafés in which to spend their evenings and their money. Hendvik would prepare a Liberation Café. A café of which it could be said that no German foot had ever trodden inside it would have enormous prestige.

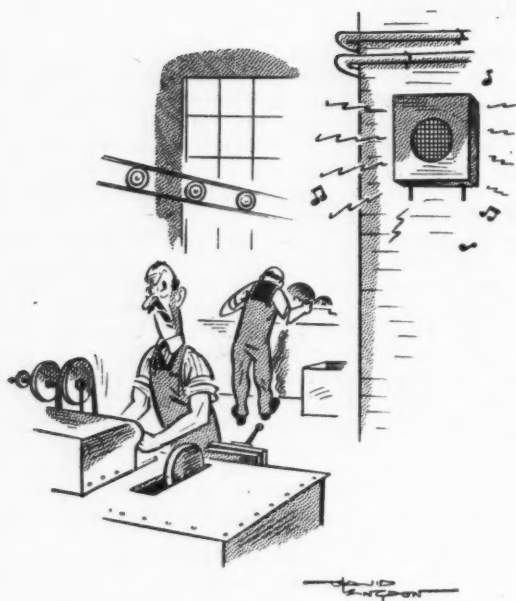
It was not easy. He acquired a basement near the docks, ostensibly for storage, but when he came to fit it up the undertaking was far from easy. Some things you could acquire by bribing Germans, others could be bought in the Black Market, but it all meant time, trouble and money. Finally, however, the job was finished.

It was an extremely smart café. The dance floor was of black glass, the bar one of the longest in Antwerp, and the fittings had all the glitter of the new and the bizarre. And the stock was considerable and most attractive. The place would undoubtedly be a sensation, and certainly should go some way towards paying for the loss of half his barge fleet.

The café opened on the 6th of September. By the 8th it was crowded from eleven in the morning onwards. On the 9th it was closed. The Germans started to shell the city and the Municipality was looking for air-raid shelters. The basement was only too safe. A month later the shelling stopped, and Hendvik planned a colossal reopening night. A fortnight later the flying-bombs started. In the end the only benefit Hendvik gained from the café was the assurance of a place there every night for himself. And that is the situation to date.

Hendvik, Jan said, has become a philosopher at last. He is now an air-raid warden under the Antwerp Municipality, and says pathetically that the war is just starting for him. I am sure there is a moral in this story.

Your loving son HAROLD.



"Wonder how THEY'd like records of machine shop noises blarin' at 'em all day long while THEY play?"

The Phoney Phleet

LIX—H.M.S. "Boniface"

IT was that epoch of the War
When officers (retired) R.N.—
Even the quite expensive men—
Began to sicken by the score,
Discerning that
The bowler hat
Possessed a cachet unremarked before;
When elderly R.N.V.R.s,
Having at last attained a grade
In which the weekly cash they made
Might purchase up to two cigars,
Were not so keen
As once they'd been
To serve as eleemosynary tars.

My Lords, deprived of both these props—
The Repaints and the Also-rans—
Turned to their sole remaining fans,
The Wrens, declaring them the tops,
The goods, the birds,
The final words,
Compared with whom all other forms were flops,
And, in a pungent A.F.O.,
Gave them—yes, gave the girls the right
To go to sea in ships and fight,
To man the guns, to sock the foe;
To bleed, to freeze,
Win D.S.C.s
And other things that count far more than dough.

In consequence whereof our Fleet
Was very shortly one half Wren,
And one half, *faute de mieux*, R.N.;
And this was up their Lordships' street
Because it meant
Without a cent
They'd found a means to make the types compete.
The dames in, say, the *Boniface*
Were sure to scrap like tiger-cats
To prove that they were not ersatz;
The males would quicken up the pace,
And there would be
A rivalry
Devoid of future for the Master Race.

Within three months the women led
By something over thirteen brace
Of U-boats sunk without a trace,
Plus forty caiques (in the Med),
And shoals and shoals
Of plaice and soles
Captured by depth-charge from the ocean bed.
My Lords of course were tickled pink;
This was the biggest bargain yet,
A cert, a cinch, a one-way bet.
Britannia, they began to think,
Might once again
Control the Main,
Be Mistress of the Ocean, Rule the Drink.

Certain philosophers, it seems,
Have marked the incidence of slip
Occurring betwixt cup and lip—
The frailty of human schemes.
So let me tell
How it befell
That *Boniface* de-bunked these deep-blue dreams.
The female section of the Fleet
Fought a great battle with the Hun.
Outnumbering him by ten to one,
They yet experienced defeat,
Were put to rout
And counted out,
Beating an ignominious retreat.

The action had been long and hot;
Heroic deeds had been performed.
The *Boniface* had three times stormed
Through hells of shell and ditto shot,
Leading the van
With marked élan;
And Fritz was, roughly speaking, in a spot,
When, running round the deck, a RAT,
One rat, appeared. The ladies screamed.
They left the guns and Huns and streamed
Flat out for Angleterre—full bat,
And never stopped.

* * * * *
Their Lordships dropped
A sad, wise tear. They'd had it. That was that.

o o

Presto!

"He was shown a farmyard and some corn stacks, but no sign of any Germans. Casually he lifted some corn sheaves and revealed the Boche hidden completely hidden by the straw."
Liverpool Echo.

Not to be Read by Goats

I WAS travelling (writes a correspondent to the *Sunday Express* of January 7th, 1945) from Liverpool to Exeter with two goats in the van. Between Bristol and Taunton I discovered that they had eaten every label off every box or case within reach, as well as each other's labels.

When my goats and I left the train at Exeter neither guard nor porters had discovered the missing labels.

That is the whole of the letter, and the reader is left to draw his own conclusions. It may be of interest to draw one or two, for that the writer had something in mind when he penned his letter is hardly in doubt, and since he has done us the credit of assuming that his intention will be clear to us, the least we can do is to make an attempt to arrive at it. What then are the lessons to be drawn from the story of these label-consuming goats?

Three possibilities spring to mind:

(a) Scandalous neglect on the part of the railway companies concerned.

This is not an easy charge to substantiate, since there appear to be only three ways in which the companies could safeguard passengers' labels against accidents of this kind, and each is full of pitfalls—

(1) By prohibiting the carriage of goats in guards' vans. Hardly possible. Goats would in that case have to take their chance with the general public in the corridors, which are already overcrowded. There might, moreover, be a breakdown of civilian morale among the travelling public if their overcoats were eaten on a large scale between, say, Bristol and Taunton.

(2) By insisting that goats shall not travel unaccompanied in any van, truck, corridor, coach, carriage, wheelbarrow, or cart belonging to the said company. Obviously no good. The goats under review were in fact accompanied on their journey, and by the writer of the letter himself, who could not, or in any case did not, prevent them eating labels right and left. They even eat each other's labels in his presence—a very bad sign.

[Note.—Passengers in charge of goats, which eat each other's labels en route, if unable to remember where they (the passengers) were taking them (the goats), should hand them (the goats) in to a Lost Property Office at a convenient station clearly labelled "To Be Called For." The goats will then eat the new labels and can be disposed of within three days under Section 47 of the company's byelaws.]

(3) By insisting that every label affixed to cases and boxes (and of course goats) intended for carriage by passenger-train should be coated before use with a solution of Hircine, the popular anti-goat paste and marked in bold lettering "NOT TO BE EATEN BY GOATS."

The objections to this are too numerous to mention.

If it be argued that the gravamen of the charge urged by the *Sunday Express* correspondent against the railways lies rather in his final sentence, i.e., that neither guard nor porters had discovered the missing labels by the time the train reached Exeter, although the last one had been eaten before Taunton, it must be replied that this surely calls for a degree of surveillance on the part of the company's employees such as they could hardly contemplate with equanimity even in peace-time. To check the labels of every package and parcel in their care, and to do it at intervals of from half to three quarters of an hour, in order to ensure that none had been eaten by goats, would demand

an expenditure of time and man-power utterly unjustifiable at this stage of war.

Indeed this cannot be the explanation of the letter. On a more careful examination it will be seen that the writer deliberately does not accuse the officials of failing to notice that the labels were missing; he implies, rather, that they had noticed it. He does not say that they "had not discovered the labels were missing," he says they had not "discovered the missing labels"—a different thing altogether. It now becomes clear that the zealous officials—and note that both guard and porters engaged themselves in the business—not only remarked the loss but went so far as to conduct a search for the labels.

It would be too laughable to suggest that the writer meant to imply some censure on the railway officials because they failed to find the labels. It is surely no part of the duty of a porter, still less of a guard, to examine the viscera of goats—and unlabelled goats at that.

No, when every possibility has been explored we are forced to the conclusion that whatever else the letter was intended to convey, it certainly reflected in no way upon the efficiency of the company's servants.

So we have to examine the second possible explanation, viz.:

(b) Scandalous neglect on the part of the person in charge of the goats, in that he

(1) introduced a pair of goats into a luggage-van, knowing them to be addicted to the consumption of labels;

(2) failed to exercise proper care and supervision of the said goats;

(3) knowingly and wilfully omitted to inform the guard (and porters) that certain labels were missing; or alternatively, if the guard and porters knew that the labels were missing, knowingly and wilfully omitted to inform the guard (and porters) that it was useless to search for them.

This won't do at all. For one thing, it is by no means proved that the person in charge of the goats knew them to be fond of labels. For another, it is not within the limits of human endurance to keep a continuous watch on two goats from Liverpool to Exeter. Watching even a single goat is tiring work, and the wonder is not that the man's vigilance broke down but that it lasted at least as far as Bristol and possibly some miles beyond. But the third and most compelling argument is that the person in charge of the goats was the man who wrote the letter.

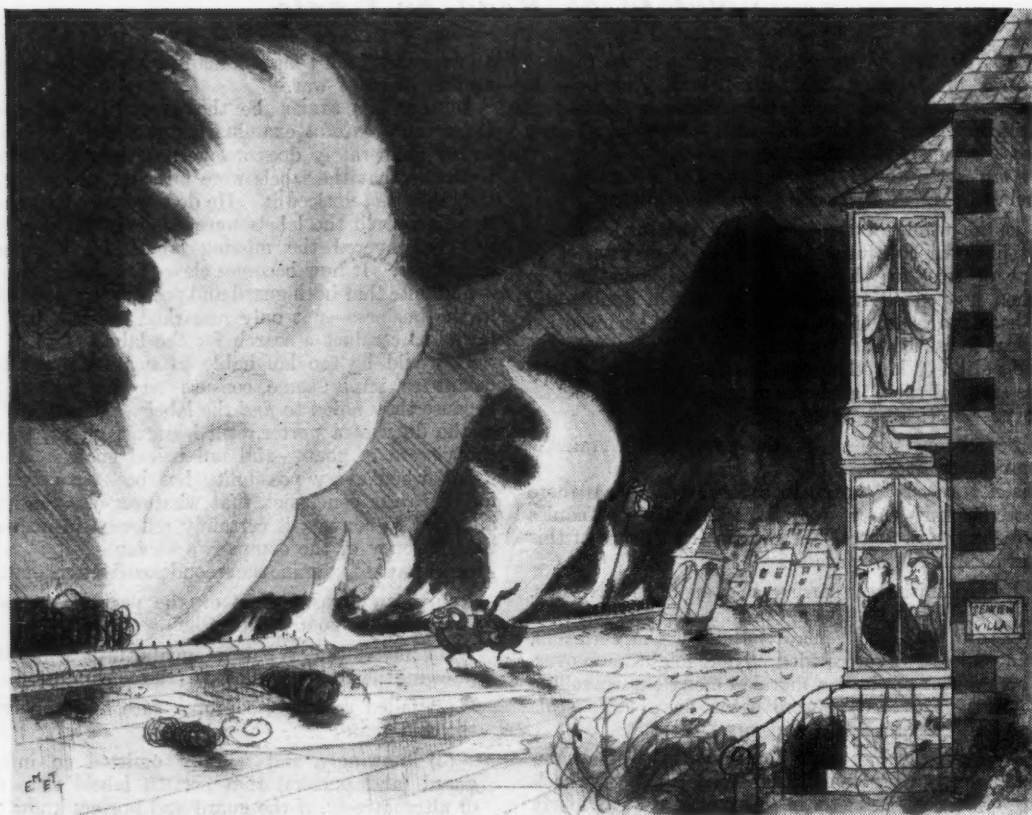
(c) The third possibility, which we shall probably have to accept, is that, unknown to us, there had appeared in the previous week's *Sunday Express* a letter by another hand in which the writer pointed out that he had recently taken shelter with his bull-dog in a pillar-box and on emerging after the raid noticed that his dog had eaten all the letters. Had any other reader had a similar experience?

And it so happened that another reader had.

H. F. E.

"The new Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Geoffrey Francis Fisher, 57-year-old Bishop of London, will sign himself 'Geoffrey Centaur.' Not one of his 96 predecessors has ever been named Geoffrey."—*Northumberland paper*.

Yes, and what about the rest of it?



"... grand being able to see the sea now they've taken the wire away."

Home Leave, M.E.F.

EAST and west of Suez
 Stretch out the furnace-sands
 And there are fabled cities
 In pitiless brazen lands:
 Old Cairo, stiff with brass-hats,
 Where all the traffic's mad,
 Benghazi and Damascus,
 Beirut, Tobruk, Bagdad,
 And desolate, God-forsaken
 But clung-by-man-to spots
 Where Time becomes Eternity
 Yet, though immortal, rots.

I know them, oh, I know them:
 The heat, the stench, the flies!
 ("Ya, Hassan," sighed the poet,
 "But we tell excellent lies.")

How could the mirage torture
 With bubbling well, or dome,
 One who, asleep or waking,
 Was sick, sick, sick for home?

Oh, comrades of the desert
 Who laughed and cursed with me,
 Now Eden Gates are open
 And I indeed am free:
 The sky is charged with snow-clouds,
 Ice sheathes each grass-blade's sword—
 But I, at home in England,
 Think of those lands abhorred

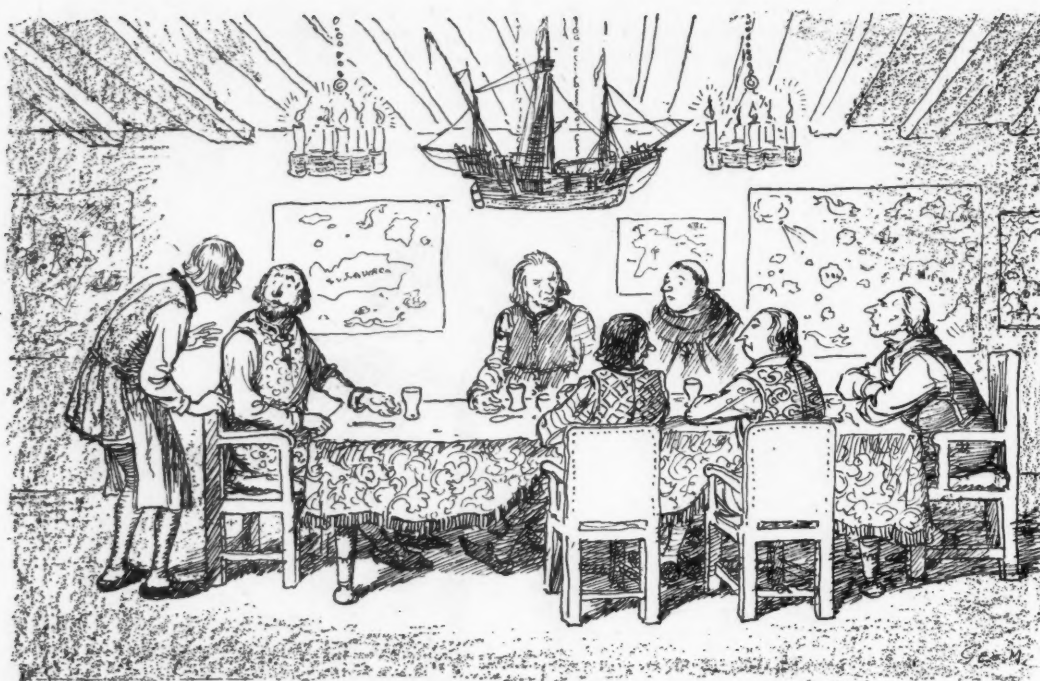
Where you lie sick of longing,
 Yet grudge not my reprieve,
 Who share with other friends than you
 The bliss of home and leave. R. C. S.



TRANSATLANTIC TIFF

"Now look, honey, if I *am* a little irritable, it's all over in a minute!!"

(After John Leech, *Punch*, November 11th, 1848, p. 204)



"I'm sorry, Captain Columbus, all our eggs are dried ones."

Not So Silly

A Child's Guide to Parliament—V

WELL, Rich-ard and Iv-y, I was tell-ing you about Parli-ament-ar-y pro-ced-ure. Some peop-le say it is slow and cum-brous: why not cut it out and get things done quick-ly? One an-swer is that when you are mak-ing laws for the peop-le the im-port-ant thing is not to be quick but care-ful. Be-sides it would be ver-y dang-er-ous if an-y law could be ver-y quick-ly made. You, Rich-ard, may be eag-er to have a law passed that cream buns shall be dis-trib-u-ted ev-er-y morn-ing, and you may fret at the var-i-ous rules and stag-es which de-lay the pass-age of that be-nef-i-cent meas-ure. But sup-pose that some-one came a-long with a Bill to Pro-hib-it Cream Buns? You would be ver-y glad then that there were all these rules and opp-ort-u-ni-ties of de-lay so that the forc-es of reas-on could be de-ploy-ed a-gainst the in-i-quit-ous prop-os-al. You see, it works both ways.

And, as a matt-er of fact, when ev-er-y-one is a-greed a-bout an-y thing no-thing could be swift-er than

the pro-ce-dure. It goes through in a flash. Look how swift-ly the sad bus-i-ness of the last King's Ab-di-ca-tion was done.

It is on-ly where there is dis-a-gree-ment that there is de-lay and then it is right.

But of course pro-ced-ure is not on-ly for de-lay.

You re-mem-ber, Rich-ard, when you went to the pa-per fact-or-y, how they did diff-er-ent things in the diff-er-ent rooms and build-ings. First they saw-ed the wood, and then they crush-ed it, and then they put it in vats and pour-ed ac-id on it; and they shredd-ed it and roll-ed it and so on—all the time the same piec-es of wood—un-til at last it came out at the oth-er end of the build-ing as a nice bit of pap-er. It is the same with the mak-ing of tanks or toff-ee.

Well, it is the same with the mak-ing of laws in the law fact-or-y. There are var-i-ous stag-es, not in-vent-ed for fun or to be an-noy-ing, but for eff-ic-i-en-cy.

Let us say that you want Parlia-

ment to make a law that Iv-y shall have a free Christ-mas dinn-er ev-er-y month—with tur-tle soup, tur-key and goose, mince-pies and de-lic-i-ous cream buns. First of all you would have to ask the House for per-miss-ion to in-tro-duce a Bill call-ed Iv-y's Christ-mas Dinn-er (Month-ly) Bill. If the House said "Yes", it would be "read" a first time and ord-er-ed to be print-ed. A Bill must be "read" three times in each House, to be-come law. The first time it is not re-al-ly read and there is no talk-ing, but the Bill is print-ed and ev-er-y-one can look at it qui-et-ly and see what it is all a-bout.

The next thing would be that the Bill would be "set" down for Sec-ond Read-ing or put on the pro-gramme for a cer-tain day. That gives an-y-one int-er-est-ed in Iv-y's stom-ach an opp-ort-u-ni-ty to be pres-ent. You would have to "move" that the Bill "be now read a sec-ond time," and you would have to ex-plain why Iv-y need-ed so much to eat. On the Sec-ond Read-ing the main prin-ci-ple of the Bill is dis-cuss-ed—what it is all

a-bout. Some Mem-bers might say that they saw no reas-on why Iv-y should have a Christ-mas dinn-er ev-er-y month, though they would not mind if it was ev-er-y oth-er month. Some might say that they know a lot of oth-er chil-dren who ought to have the same num-ber of Christ-mas dinn-ers. Oth-ers might say that they were in gen-er-al a-gree-ment and would vote for the Sec-ond Read-ing, but they were not happ-y a-bout the de-tails of the men-u and would move a-mend-ments at a lat-er stage. And some-one would be sure to say that he thought it should be a Christ-mas lunch-eon, be-cause he did not app-rove of Iv-y stay-ing up late and go-ing to bed with a dis-tend-ed tumm-y.

Well, at the end of the de-bate there is a di-vis-ion, or vote. We will sup-pose that you win and the Sec-ond Read-ing is carr-ied. That means that the House has app-rov-ed the prin-ci-ple of the Bill—but not the de-tails. Iv-y is to have a Christ-mas dinn-er; but it is not sett-led what she will have—or how much.

So the Bill is "comm-itt-ed" or hand-ed ov-er to a "Comm-itt-ee" and in comm-itt-ee the de-tails are dis-cussed. No-bod-y at this stage can start the ar-gu-ment a-bout Iv-y hav-ing a Christ-mas dinn-er. But they can put down an a-mend-ment:

"To leave out 'tur-key' and in-sert 'rabb-it'"

or
"To leave out 'goose' and in-sert 'cold boil-ed mutt-on'."

On the oth-er hand the friends of Iv-y might try to im-prove the simp-le re-past. They could put down an a-mend-ment:

"before 'tur-tle soup' insert 'oys-ters.'"

Well, all these a-mend-ments are de-bat-ed, and per-haps vot-ed on, un-till the whole Bill has been gone ov-er with what some writ-ers call a small-tooth-comb—and oth-ers a tooth-comb.

The next thing is the Re-port stage. What is that, Rich-ard? I am try-ing to tell you. All this hard work has been done, as a rule, by a small se-lect-ed bod-y of Mem-bers, in rath-er drear-y rooms up-stairs, with no pub-lic-i-ty. When they have done the Bill is re-port-ed back to the House, as a-mend-ed; and the Mem-bers who were not on the Comm-itt-ee can have a go at it if they like. On the de-tails, still, you un-der-stand. It is like the Comm-itt-ee stage, on-ly the whole House is con-cern-ed. This stage is use-ful for tid-y-ing up, and for sec-ond thoughts. For ex-amp-le, when some-one pro-pos-ed that Iv-y

should have oys-ters as well as tur-tle soup, the Min-ist-er might say "Well, I am all for that, but I am not sure if there are an-y oys-ters! Be-fore the Re-port stage I will find out." So on the Re-port stage the same a-mend-ment is put down, and, if the Min-ist-er has found an-y oyst-ers, he may acc-ept it. Or not.

The next, and last, stage is the Third Read-ing.

By now, you see Rich-ard, the House has app-rov-ed the prin-ci-ple; and its Comm-itt-ee has a-mend-ed the de-tails, and it has this last chance to in-spect the whole thing and see what it thinks of it. If it likes it can re-fuse to give a Third Read-ing, and that will be the end of the Bill, but it can-not do an-y more ser-i-ous a-mend-ment in de-tail. So there are now diff-er-ent rules of de-bate. You can-not com-plain a-bout the de-tails, for they are sett-led; you can-not com-plain that some-thing or oth-er—treac-le tart, for ex-amp-le—is not in the Bill. You should have done that in Comm-itt-ee, or on the Re-port stage. But you can say that you do not like what is in the Bill as it stands. You can say that you gave it a tep-id supp-ort on Sec-ond Read-ing, and hop-ed that it would be im-proved in Comm-itt-ee. But now that you see it a-gain you think it is verm-in-ous, and can-not give a vote for it. It will corr-upt Iv-y, cause re-vo-lut-ion, up-set the Bal-ance of Trade, and so forth.

Well, then there is a vote, or "di-vis-ion" on the Third Read-ing. If that is carr-ied the Clerks write some words in Nor-man French up-on it (with which I will not troub-le you) and it is sent a-long the pass-age to the House of Lords. Then it goes through pre-cise-ly the same pro-cess—three Read-ings, Comm-itt-ee and Re-port—though in the Lords they ver-y seld-om take so long.

When the Bill has had its Third Read-ing all that re-mains is the Roy-al Ass-ent. The King—or his re-pre-sent-at-ives—still give his ass-ent in Nor-man French—"Le Roy le veult," which is prett-y bi-zarre, but does no harm. If he re-fused his ass-ent, which now-a-days he nev-er does, he would say "Le Roy s'av-is-er-a".

The Bill now be-comes law. It is an Act of Parl-ia-ment—or a Stat-ute: and those cle-ver peop-le who have for so long been say-ing "Why don't you do some-thing?" now u-nite to say "Why ev-er did you do that?"

Such, Rich-ard, rough-ly and brief-ly, is Parl-ia-ment-ar-y pro-ced-ure on the leg-is-lat-ive or law-mak-ing side. I hope my de-scrip-tion has not been too foggy-y. If it has, it is not the fault

of the sys-tem, which is ver-y sound and sci-ent-if-ic. Of course, there is a way of quick-en-ing the whole thing: and that is to let all the laws be made by Gov-ern-ment De-part-ments in those big off-i-ces I showed you in White-hall. An-y-one who pre-fers that is wel-come, I am sure. But, a-part from that, if an-y-one can sug-gest a re-all-y good a-mend-ment to the pres-ent pro-ced-ure, I will give him a bag of sov-er-eigns. A. P. H.

The Last of the Raiders

O H, mony a bonnie bairn langsyne
Its sire must weep in vain,
And mony a wae-ful wife repine,
Her guidman grimly slain;

The peel was flaming to the sky,
Its guardians lay in gore;
The stall and hill were bare o' kye
Lang ere the nicht was o'er.

For Eliot's larder must be filled
By what but Eliot's blade?
The bluid o' more than beasts be
spilled
When Eliot rode a raid!

An Eliot is an Eliot still;
The auld weird he must dree;
Wi' hungry mouths at hame to fill
Who should hie forth but he?

His fathers mustered in the mirk
That meat they might provide,
And darkling hamewards drive the
stirk;
And in his bluid they bide;

So there's nae star to show his way,
Nae moon to gie him licht,
For Eliot noo must seek by day
What syne they found by nicht.

I saw an Eliot yester morn,
An unco sicht to view—
A basket on his sword-arm borne,
Dour, in the butcher's queue;

And lang, lang micht his lady wait
And lang his children fast,
For Eliot he had risen late
And in the queue was last!

W. K. H.

An Insult

"When the Committee discussed the award yesterday a letter was read from the National Union of Women Teachers, stating that they learned with great indignation that the scales continued the differentiation of yap for men and women teachers."

Hants paper.

An Old Man's Tale

THIS story is of the days before I learned not to question O'Hanrahan, but to accept what he told me and be thankful, for his tales were always a little out of the ordinary, and so worth hearing by anyone that had some taste for novelty. If there was anything that did not quite tally with what I thought I knew of the world, I learned to turn it all over in my mind afterwards and to form my own opinion; but if there was

anything that did not appear to me to be completely credible, I learned that it was a mistake to question O'Hanrahan further; such questioning seemed to excite him, and, far from making his story clearer, he was more likely to be goaded to further flights, so that what at first seemed unlikely became frankly incredible. He never struck me as being an old man, but he had the wistful expression of one who had lived a lonely life; how much of

it I was never able to guess. But enough of these rambling comments on O'Hanrahan and his way of telling a tale, and I will get on to the tale itself.

It was some years ago, and in Ireland, and I was walking a bog for snipe, and O'Hanrahan was showing me over it. In fact it was O'Hanrahan who had asked me to shoot the bog in the first place: it did not actually belong to him, but he was a man of generous moods, and, if he had only offered the hospitality of the little field that he did own, his generosity would have fallen short of its natural boundaries by many square miles. So he had invited me to shoot a few hundred acres of a fine bog that followed a stream along a wide valley and was as good a place for snipe as you could find. It was singularly deep for a black bog, and whether there had been old quarries there or fish-ponds, or whether it bubbled from natural springs, the ground was deep and shaky, and it was a hard place to walk. Our conversation amounted to very few words an hour, and those in whispers, for it is an unfortunate fact that the human voice is the most dreaded thing in nature, at any rate among snipe, and our voices seem to carry further than we suppose. Suddenly O'Hanrahan spoke out quite loud: "Don't step on that green tussock," he said.

I had come to bad ground and was walking carefully and was close to the bright green tussock.

"Why not?" I asked. For I was younger then, and knew less of the ways of bogs.

"I'll tell you," he said.

He spoke no more then for some while, because of the snipe, but later, when we got to dry ground and I sat down and had lunch on a packet of sandwiches and gave O'Hanrahan his from a flask, he told me why.

"If you stepped on that green tussock," he said, "you'd go down and down through the summer, and the shaky bog would close over you, and then..."

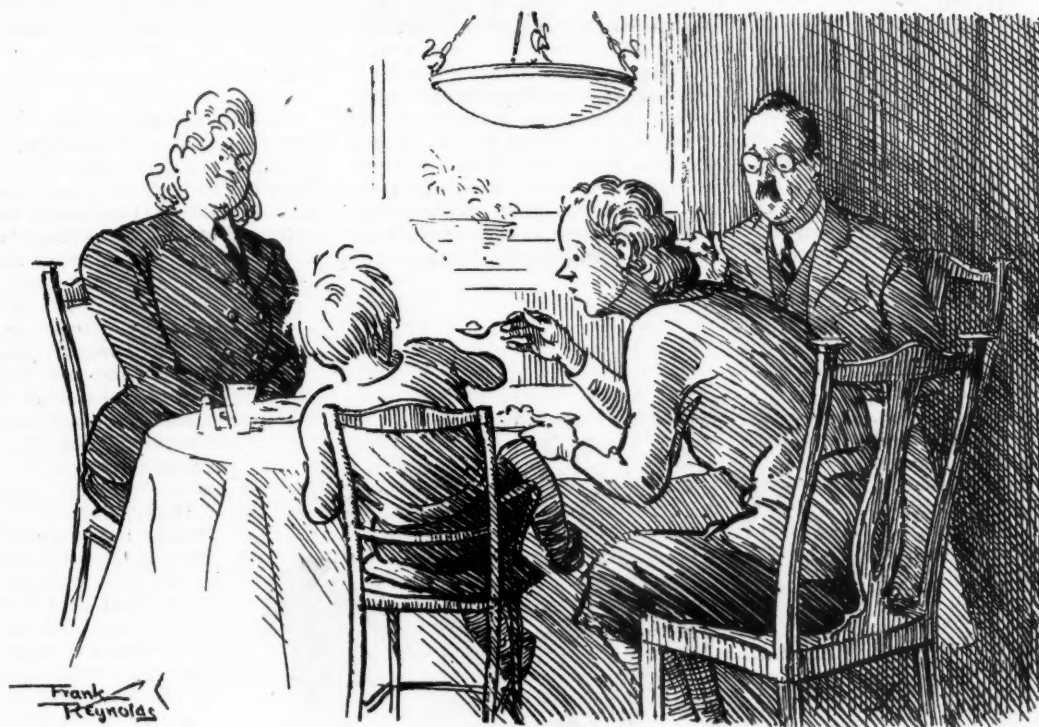
"I'd be dead then," I interrupted.

"You would not," he said. "But you'd be in the elf-king's palace. Did you ever hear tell of him? And there he'd be seated upon his throne of everlasting moss in his robes of twilight, and you before him wondering at his splendour; and maybe he'd give you a drink of heather ale out of a goblet of buried gold, and you'd drink, and



"I'm a bit short of cash this week—would you mind taking this in exchange?"

IONICUS



"Eat up your pudding, Cyril, and one of these days you'll go to sea like Auntie Daisy."

you'd only be there a minute, and, you'd struggle and float up to the surface, but a hundred years would have gone by, aye and more nor a hundred. It's the way of the kingdom of elf-land, and it's well known. So don't never step on that green tussock, however inviting it looks, for it's lonely you'd be with the centuries gone rattling past you, and you here all by yourself."

And, as I said, it was in the days before I learned not to question O'Hanrahan.

"How do you know all that?" I asked.

"Sure, I stepped on it once myself."

So solemnly did he say those words that I couldn't help blurting out some flippant remark about my being surprised that anyone who knew the bog as well as O'Hanrahan could ever make such a mistake, and ending up by saying: "How did you come to do it?"

I remember to-day the very words of his answer.

"Sure, I was fleeing from Oliver Cromwell."

ANON.

Memo to Tenant

DEAR MR. STEAMISH,—In answer to your complaint passed on to Mr. Tingle re your roof and stairs about which you say complaints have been sent in for ten years, if these came from neighbours unsigned through spite we should ignore them, but now that you get nasty about it and include the drains, Mr. Tingle has sent a man round to go into it and he is on the sick list over it.

The upshot of his report is that what you were doing with a piano on the winding staircase ten years ago is more to the point than what you can do to get it up or down now and save yourself going to bed through the antique slit type window which if you do not like we can get good offers for from the museum.

You say also that when it rains you get wet going out to climb in, and stay wet when in because the wet has got in before you have, which Mr. Tingle cannot understand at all because it is

put so roundabout, and he says it will clear things if you come down and tell it him in black and white.

What you mean by being stared at in nightshirt out of window is also a bit obscure, and it looks as if you are letting yourself in for some bother on the scanty attire issue if we care to go into it.

Mr. Beek reports that he could bring a peck of trouble on such as you when people are crying out for houses, especially when you throw the drains in as well as the roof. If you could see how much a slate people were prepared to pay for thatching you would laugh on the other side of your fence, says Mr. Beek, and he says that reminds him that it is an offence for a tenant to let his hedge grow more than 11 feet high, and if you do not get yours put right we shall have to take steps. Mr. Tingle thinks you have done it deliberately to save nightshirts.

J. TINGLE,
Commissioner for Drains.

At the Play

"SEE HOW THEY RUN" (COMEDY)
 "ALICE IN WONDERLAND" (PALACE)
 "THE CRITIC" (ARTS)

"FASTER! Faster!" cried the *Red Queen*. And (so we assume) "Faster yet!" cried Mr. HENRY KENDALL as he thrust the panting company of *See How They Run* up and down the vicarage hall, in and out the garden. At Welton Waudby, as behind the Looking-Glass, all this running gets us no farther. But though we remain in a familiar world of disguises and debagings, bottles and bishops, crooked questions and crotchety answers, we are at least given no time to ponder. Mr. PHILIP KING, author of the clerical extravaganza, owes a great deal to Mr. KENDALL's production. He should himself have credit for the demented logic which stitches his farce together. "Did you ever see such fun in your life?" asks the rhyme in effect. Frankly, quite often, yet—always assuming that you are in the mood for low jinks in one of Mr. AUSTIN's "umbrageous vicarages"—there have been many farces much less happy than this.

It is a dance of vicars, an ecclesiastic rout, a capering of the cloth. Everyone seems to be somebody else. "Sergeant!" calls the *Bishop* in despair as the third act wanes and a green-cheese moon peers over the garden's topiary-work—"Sergeant! Arrest most of these people!" He might as well say "Behold that dormouse!" In any event he is suspect. How do we know that he is a bishop? We have only the author's word for it, and two of the vicars are undeniably bogus. After that bishop! Collar him! Pursue him into the next play!

The piece belongs to the pantomime season. Its corkscrew-ramblings are meant for the beamish boys, for those in a holiday humour. A is for Actor, who's played by GEORGE GEE; B is for Bishop, a dizzy D.D.; C is for Clerics, who clatter away; D for Debagging, that farcical stay. So through the alphabet. It all begins, you will under-

stand, when Mr. GEE (as an ex-actor, *Lance-Corporal Widd*) attends a performance of *Private Lives* in the vicar's suit, with the vicar's ex-actress wife (Miss BERYL MASON). After this *Miss Pilling* (Miss JOAN SANDERSON) makes a maudlin progress from couch to cupboard, Mr. GEORGE BISHOP booms, Mr. JOHN DEVERELL dithers, and the cast goes and comes back and goes again until the beholder, according to his views on farce, is either faint with laughter or groping for his hat.



"THERE'S NOWT SO QUEER AS FOLK."

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| The Rev. Lionel Toop | MR. RONALD SIMPSON |
| The Rev. Arthur Humphreys | MR. JOHN DEVERELL |
| Bishop of Lax | MR. GEORGE BISHOP |
| Penelope Toop | MISS BERYL MASON |
| Lance-Corporal Clive Widd | MR. GEORGE GEE |

There is an athletic team. Mr. GEE, looking more like a wooden soldier than ever, is not the most inventive of comedians but here his slippery-tongued manner is appropriate and he has an ingratiating wriggle. Mr. RONALD SIMPSON, whether dressed or disordered, is a charming member of the church militant; Mr. BISHOP's prelate, Miss MASON's vicaress, Miss JOAN HICKSON as a lass of the village, and Mr. MICHAEL DUFFIELD as a German prisoner (escaped) and a churlish priest (bogus) are usually in the hunt; and Miss SANDERSON is best when that portentous lay-figure *Miss Pilling* is recovering from her many

comas. Finally, Mr. DEVERELL enlivens the third act as an injured innocent with a mind of uncared wool, and the cast further includes a bull-terrier with a firm grasp of his part.

After this whiffing and burbling, LEWIS CARROLL's *Wonderland* is remarkably tranquil. Miss CLEMENCE DANE has realized that a mock-turtle *Alice* is useless: the books cannot be treated as a Christmas rag and the players must speak no more than is set down for them. At the Palace the Tenniel drawings—thanks to Miss G. E. CALTHROP—take on a grave and satisfying life and the characters move across the stage at what, compared with the wild cavortings at the Comedy, is the pace of a minuet.

Oddly, *Alice's* own part is long but not exciting: she must, as it were, act as stooge to everyone she meets—fish, flesh, or fowl. Miss PEGGY CUMMINS, both sedate and downright, has the perfect approach. Queens and Gryphons and Unicorns, shops that turn into boats and back again—very reasonably she takes them all for granted. Dame SYBIL THORNDIKE, at morning performances, unites the *Queen of Hearts* (bloody, bold, and resolute) and the flying *White Queen*—Miss MARGARET RUTHERFORD ascends the throne in the afternoons—and, among the others, Mr. ARTHUR YOUNG's *King of Hearts* and Mr. FRITH BANBURY as that fantastic Quixote, the *White Knight*, are both indisputably in the vein.

A third wonderland is that of Old Drury, reduced to the proportions of the Arts Theatre, in a revival of *The Critic*. In performance SHERIDAN's play has the air of a witty improvisation. Of Mr. HUGH BURDEN's practitioner in panegyric we can say, in *Puff's* own words, that "he more than merited those repeated bursts of applause which he drew from a most brilliant and judicious audience"; Mr. ERIC MESSITER's *Sneer* is a whole grove of stinging-nettles; and, in the tragedy rehearsed, we gather that the *Whiskerandos* of Mr. TONY QUINN has known more of Dublin than Madrid. J. C. T.

Modified for India

"GOOD morning. I have come about my travelling allowance. Form E or something. I am leaving for Dertibad to-morrow."

"Temporary or permanent duty?"

"That depends on Dertibad. They may send me back. Why?"

"If you are going on temporary duty you draw one and a half times first-class fare and a Form E; this is worth half the first-class fare, so we subtract it from the one and a half, leaving one first-class fare. You give the man at the station your Form E together with half the first-class fare, and he gives you your ticket. You are thus half a first-class fare in hand."

"H'm."

"You follow?"

"Only the last sentence."

"Well, that's all that matters."

"And what about permanent duty?"

"You draw three times the first-class fare—"

"I say!"

"—and a Form E."

"Don't tell me. You subtract it, so I only get two and a half times first-class fare."

"That's right. Then you pay the man at the station half the first-class fare and your Form E. This time you've made twice the first-class fare."

"How far is Dertibad?"

"About a thousand miles."

"Goody. Put it down as permanent. Three times the first-class fare to Dertibad, please."

"Ah, you don't get it like that. It's only a credit. You claim it from the Paymaster when you get to Dertibad. Otherwise he won't believe you."

"Will he want a photograph of me beside the station sign?"

"You should get the cash about July."

"But look here, my pay hasn't come through yet."

"Oh, we can give you a travelling advance."

"How much?"

"Up to three times first-class fare."

"But you just said—"

"Ah, this isn't your actual travelling allowance. It's an advance *against* it."

"A credit, you mean?"

"No, a debit. At least, it's a credit to the Paymaster, but a debit to you."

"It's a credit to whoever thought it out."

"But you still have to make your claim when you get to Dertibad."

"What, do I get some *more*?"

"No. I'm giving you your three first-class fares now."

"Well—"

"Yes, but when I send this debit to the Paymaster he will want a credit for it."

"He would. I thought you said it was a credit for him."

"So it is. But it's still a debit for you. So you send in your claim for three times first-class fare *less* this advance."

"But that's *nothing*."

"Exactly."

"You mean I send in a claim for *nothing*!"

"Ah, it's not nothing to the Paymaster. You see, he's got to have a voucher."

"A what?"

"A voucher. That's what they call anything that accounts for a payment. He's got to have a voucher for this payment I'm making to you."

"Okay. Then why don't I make this voucher for the same amount as the advance?"

"Because it's a *claim*. You can't claim an amount when you've had it already."

"Now look. The Paymaster gets this debit from you about the advance—three times first-class fare. Now, how will it help him to get a claim for *nothing* from me?"

"Because that nothing is something,

your entitlement, less another something, what you've had. It's the first something, your entitlement, that he's interested in."

"But if it's nothing, it's nothing. He can't just *disregard* the second something, what I've had."

"Which you've had. He doesn't disregard it. It's his balancing credit. Listen. I pay you now and it's a debit to you and a credit to him. Your claim, less the advance, is a credit to you and a debit to him, but if it *wasn't* less the advance it would still be a credit to you and a debit to him, only for an amount equal to the difference between your entitlement or credit and your advance or debit and—"

"Okay. I'll do anything you say. But tell me one thing."

"Yes?"

"Does anyone ever admit he's going on temporary duty?"

SITUATIONS VACANT

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN.

Control of Engagement Order, 1943.

Women between the ages of 18 to 40 are Excluded from the advertisements below for Persons Wanted.

BLUE Wicker Cot, as new.—3, Allen Close, Shaw.—*Lancs. paper.*

Nobody in *that*, anyway.



"And why not? You're playing with my train."



"Hark—a buzz bomb."
 "I can't hear a thing."
 "Then it must be a rocket."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

An Educated Shakespeare

THAT Shakespeare was by natural endowment qualified to become a professor, and took to the more wayward occupation of writing plays only under the pressure of circumstances, is a view that may sometimes be discerned beneath the surface of the treatises on Shakespeare which from time to time issue from our universities. In *Shakespeare's History Plays* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 18/-) Mr. E. M. W. TILLYARD, a Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, says that he hopes his book will serve to strengthen the idea of an educated Shakespeare. Shakespeare, he holds, was a schoolmaster before coming to London and may therefore be assumed to have reached something like "the level of education we expect major poets to attain." "Quite surprisingly knowledgeable," as Mr. TILLYARD elsewhere calls him, Shakespeare did not write his history plays piecemeal, his tone changing as he proceeded in harmony with his enlarging experience of human nature. He first absorbed the main ideas about English mediæval history current among his educated contemporaries, and then composed a cycle of plays to illustrate the Elizabethan conception of the world-order in its relation to historical events. But for various reasons, set forth by Mr. TILLYARD, he found Henry V an unsuitable figure with which to round off his philosophy of history, and had to wait till *Macbeth* to complete "the whole

adjustment of politics to life." In view of the position occupied by *Macbeth* himself in that play, it might seem a reasonable inference that Shakespeare by this time was chiefly impressed by the misery and despair attendant on the life of action and power. But to draw such an inference would imply that Shakespeare was affected rather by what he had seen and experienced than by what he had read, an inference that would repel Mr. TILLYARD, who writes in his preface that he has much to say about Shakespeare's ideas on politics but nothing about Shakespeare and the Earl of Essex. So, in Mr. TILLYARD's opinion, *Macbeth* is a ripper version of *Richard III*, the theme of both plays being the punishment of a villain and the establishment of a virtuous dynasty. It is true that Mr. TILLYARD devotes a sentence to the personal tragedy of *Macbeth* which, he says, is more important than the actual political theme. But as he gives two pages to the political theme, the reader is inevitably left with the impression that the really significant figure in the play, the figure from whom, had he been a shade less disinterested, the play would have taken its name, is *Malcolm*, "the ideal ruler who has subordinated all personal pleasures, and with them all personal charm, to his political obligations. . . . He is what Shakespeare found that the truly virtuous king, on whom he had meditated so long, at last turned into."

H. K.

"Fellow-Me-Lad"

To reprint *A Boy in Kent* (HOLLIS AND CARTER, 8/6) and garnish the reprint with Mr. CHARLES STEWART's enchanting pen-pictures is to deal worthily with a little classic and its old and new readers. Mr. STEWART's vignette of a village shopkeeper's small son, gazing from between the lace curtains of his bedroom window at the daily drama across the yard, prepares you for that sense of his world as a play produced for his particular entertainment which is one of Mr. C. HENRY WARREN's happiest endowments. His childhood's "benefits" staged a village baker's brushwood bakery and the hospitable encounters of the baker's round: five weeks' hop-picking every year, during which imported "casuals"—with prams and rags—and "toffs"—in sequins and feathers—devastated the shops; and a parish church introduction to society which ranged from "the Castle" and "the Hall" to the humble recipients of a guinea dole every March. The shops—there were only two—shared in the liaison work of the church. Aristocratic stewards had their commercial dealings, and gipsies, when luck brought the dole their way, became for once acceptable customers. The grace of these simple annals is less artless than it appears. Their truth to nature—Victorian village nature—is incontestable.

H. P. E.

Hostilities Men

Among the good things which have emerged from the world's present tribulation may be reckoned the fact that future generations will have no excuse for not knowing how the Lower Deck lives. Hostilities men with an urge for self-expression will have seen to that. Mr. GODFREY WINN, swept up by the demands of the Services, took with him into his new sphere one at least of his "Civvy Street" possessions, namely, the journalistic instinct which had won him success as a popular columnist. The result is a brisk, graphic and readable account, under the title *Home from Sea* (HUTCHINSON, 10/6), of what was in fact a comparatively uneventful twelve months in the Navy: for, paradoxically, the writer's experiences afloat as a civilian were far more full of hazard than those he went through as a seaman. The value of comradeship and of

the Service tradition are the points which appear to have impressed themselves most favourably on his mind. On the *contra* side, lack of privacy is the deprivation which (in common with most hostilities men) he seems to have felt the most deeply. Both the merits and the demerits of Mr. WINN's narrative are those of the journalistic writer—on the one hand, a briskness and vivacity of style, and, on the other, a tendency to hover perilously near the borderline of bathos. An old Navy man, too, though he might notice nothing wrong about "Keats' 'magic case-ments opened wide,'" would assuredly have something to say about Mr. WINN's definition of "pussar" as the equivalent of "pukka," signifying first-rate; for "pusser's" (which is to say "purser's") has been a term almost invariably derogatory in its implications since the days of Captain Marryat.

C. F. S.

Lucky Dip

Very few Christians take the trouble to round up unbelievers tenderly; yet there are always a few to demand with the almost canine sagacity of Thomas Fuller: "Is there no way to bring home a wandering sheep without worrying him to death?" Among these you may count Mr. DOUGLAS WOODRUFF, the pedigree of whose *More Talking at Random* (BURNS, OATES, 7/6) derives, one suspects, from the merry *exempla* of mediæval preachers through such scholarly and genial apologists as Thomas Browne and Fuller himself. In their first weekly appearance, the delightful commonplace books, of which this is the second, may have humanized the outlook of Christians only—a very necessary office. Now it is the world's turn; and a world that fails to respond, in the words of the American on page 23, "your chatter rocks me," must be a dull world indeed. The chinks in his own side's armour are seldom despised as acceptable openings for irony; and an admonitory letter of Manning's vies in period absurdity with a Perth lady's eulogy on the Albert Memorial. Among a hundred penetrating aphorisms this answer to a seasonable riddle is hard to beat: "Intelligence is whatever enables you to do without education, and education is what enables you to do without intelligence."

H. P. E.

A Bedside Book

In the foreword to *Night and Day* (HUTCHINSON, 10/6) Mr. JAMES WEDGWOOD DRAWBELL describes it as "something in the nature of a bedside book." As the editor of a popular Sunday newspaper, Mr. DRAWBELL is accustomed to blunt the impact of reality on his many readers. The plain truth is that *Night and Day* is a bedside book, and a very entertaining one, which can be recommended to anyone who wants distraction from the anxieties of the present times. The author's benevolent view of human nature, which when concentrated on a single object, as in his account of Dorothy Thompson's English visit, became a little monotonous, produces an agreeable effect when it ranges freely over the many well-known people he has met. He writes at some length of Leslie Howard, whom he believes to have been deliberately shot down by the Germans, of Lady Oxford, whom he at last, seven years after his first attempt, persuaded to write an article on her married life, and on Dr. A. J. Cronin, hostile criticism of whom he deprecates, though he does not perhaps greatly help him with "Whenever Cronin and I met, the talk would turn to stocks or shares, to values, to dividends." His relatively genial sketch of Edda Ciano shows that sympathy comes naturally to him, and the whole book lives up to the very pleasant impression created by the delightful frontispiece of Leslie Howard and his daughter on her wedding day.

H. K.

"Storied Palimpsest"

Mr. FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG's *The Island* (HEINEMANN, 12/6) is a poem—a 70,000-word poem—on the subject of England, from the time, within an æon or two, when the Channel first cut us off from the Continent, down to the Battle of Britain, 1940. He has not undertaken the work—he calls it "the Island's storied palimpsest"—lightly; in fact he says he has pondered it through four slow-paced years, and the solid parts of the book are in slow-paced blank verse. Blank verse is always a willing horse, ready for anything from a full-dress description of the Armada to a sort of hymn to Victorian science and invention. Then there are lighter interludes; a "Chant of the Ages" (with uneasy memories of "The Dynasts"); a "Garland of English Flowers" (surely Kipling . . . ?)—or a scene from Hambledon Cricket Club in the 1780's, showing the dawn of democracy in the great game ("Dorset: What's your name? Labourer: Hogsflesh, your Grace. Dorset: Of course, I remember you!"). Patriotism *The Island* certainly has ("the salt in her veins is drawn from no Mediterranean puddle"), and of course sheer bulk and staying power—but it is not history, except in the spirit of gorgeous Technicolor, and not poetry. In 1914, as a young soldier, FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG had a small but true lyric gift, which flowered as did others out of that heart of agony. Now something—sentiment, or conscience, or possibly the admonition of Sir John Squire which appears on the back of the book-jacket—has persuaded him that a young poet betrays himself by spreading into a middle-aged best-seller, and further that he can make amends by returning, after twenty-seven novels, to his first love. It is a delusion common to successful people; and yet as he penned the closing lines of his vast ill-digested epic ("Our anguished world would show a sorrier scene had Britain never been") can Mr. BRETT YOUNG have remembered himself thirty years ago?

P. M. F.



About My Alarm-Clock

WHEN my alarm-clock first came to me it was still in its Upright Period.

"The only alarming thing about it," said my Aunt Isabella, a big woman who got everything a little wrong, in giving it to me, "is its habitual reluctance to alarm." Reluctance was quite the wrong word. The clock was perfectly prepared to carry out the responsible duty for which it had been amply, if not absolutely correctly, designed, but it was a high-mettled article that required finesse in handling. In this it was not unlike my Aunt Isabella, and I think that explains why it was they never really got along.

She had acquired it in 1903 from Robert, the famous clock-maker in the Champs-Élysées, who described it as a *réveille-matin*, which sounded better and proved dearer than an ordinary alarm-clock. At that time it had a large, white face, honest and expressive, and heavily encircled by grained timber. Originally it had two small legs, but my aunt unscrewed one to wedge up a rattling window in an ill-fitting hotel in Inverness and forgot to replace it when she left. I always meant to go north and recover it, but once the clock entered its Lateral Period it seemed simpler to unscrew the other leg, which I did, posting it to the hotel in Inverness so that they could silence a second window. They never acknowledged it. The whole thing was crowned by a large bell, the hammer of which was checked either by utter exhaustion on the part of the spring or by the engagement of a heavy iron arm, in shape and size very similar to the control lever of a tram. On the back of the clock was a regulator working in a slot. One end of the slot was labelled "A" and the other "R". Some took the view that these stood for "Avance" and "Retard," but there was also an influential school which thought they represented "*Aller et Retour*." As Monsieur Robert's own mainspring had failed shortly before I took over the clock I was unable to ask him what he had intended.

I make no apology for these horological details, because when all is said

and done what I am writing about is my alarm-clock.

It took to me immediately, partly I am sure because I never expected it to work before ten o'clock in the morning. That summer I had taken a fishing-lodge on the upper reaches of the Orinoco, and luckily I took my alarm-clock with me. Luckily, for the agent who had let me the fishing had forgotten to tell me how vital a part it would play in the tackle needed for the *gumbolola*, or pampus-fish, which was my prey that year. One of the many curious things about this creature, apart from its looking like a pig and tasting like a rabbit and sounding like a horse, was that when hooked it was too shy to admit what had occurred. Wherever it happened to be it remained perfectly still, paralysed by embarrassment, and it was therefore necessary for the sportsman to be awakened from time to time so as to strike his line and make certain nothing but bait was on the end of it. There was no mad hurry about *gumbolola* fishing, and I used to set my alarm-clock for about three hours ahead.

One evening at the very moment it went off I was dreaming I had hooked a brace of enormous fish. (They ran very large, though rather clumsily.) In my excitement I rose from my arm-chair and fell into the turgid waters of the Orinoco, taking with me a bottle of ginger-wine and my alarm-clock that were on the dumb-waiter beside me. The clock reached the bottom before I did, having time on its side, and when at length I was dragged out it was found to be impaled on my knee like a tambourine. The man who normally carried the dynamite for me took it away and plunged it into the tank of oil which we kept for frying *gumbolola*. This undoubtedly saved it from rheumatic fever, but it also radically altered the colour of its face, which from then on was extremely Latin. I will not say its expression was afterwards less honest, but critics insist there has been something a little fishy about it ever since.

As a result of this accident my alarm-clock declined to undertake its

duties except on its back. This Recumbent Period was to last about five years, and was only terminated by a meeting with a Portuguese nobleman whose name sounded as if it should be drawn off into a decanter and slightly warmed. We were both staying in the Knockerbicker Hotel on Thirty-Three and a Third Street, and as we were retiring to rest early one evening after a visit to the Natural History Museum I happened to tell him about my treasure. He showed interest and assured me that his own clock had also been through a Recumbent Period, which he had cured by kicking it downstairs in a special way he had picked up in Syria. I stoutly refused to permit him to do this to mine, but in the end I weakened on condition the treatment was limited to one flight. Unfortunately the clock's single leg gave it a bias, like a bowl, and instead of one flight it took the whole hotel quite easily in its stride. On the twenty-second floor a fashionable ball was in progress, and the spectacle of my alarm-clock, which had attained considerable momentum and was ringing like a nest of fire-engines, being hotly pursued through the crowd by the Portuguese nobleman and myself, must have taken much of the gilt off it. We were neither of us in evening dress. On the nineteenth floor some Buffaloes were thirstily reuniting, on the eleventh a vacuum-cleaner conference was in full intake, while down on the sixth a number of ladies were busily celebrating some invisible triumph. None of these functions we left exactly as we found them. Having recovered my alarm-clock, which had shattered the window of the office on the ground floor, we returned by the elevator. It says much for Robert's construction that as a mechanism the clock survived, but subsequent experiments showed that the Lateral Period had been ushered in, when it was going to work on its side, or not at all.

There is still a lot I should like to tell you about my alarm-clock, and one day when things are quieter I shall. But I do hope I have said enough for you to understand why it means everything to me.

ERIC.

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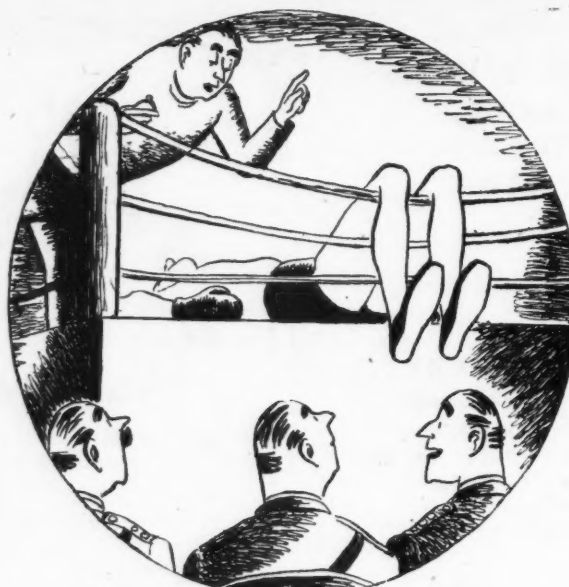


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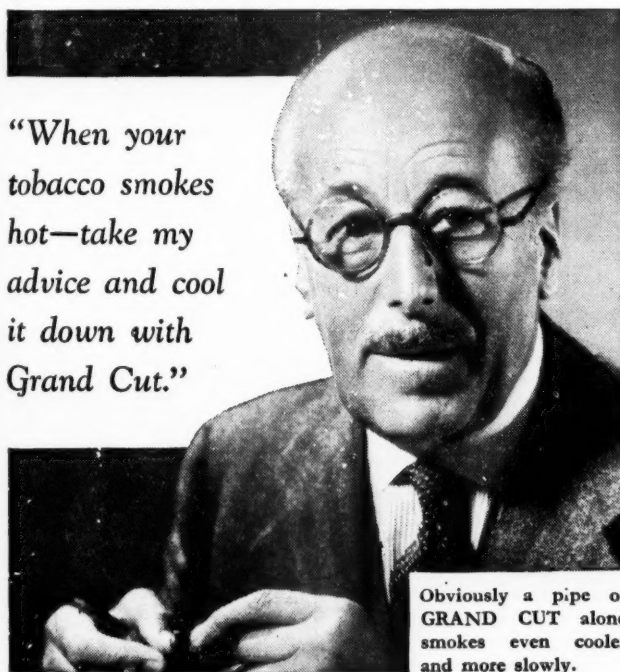
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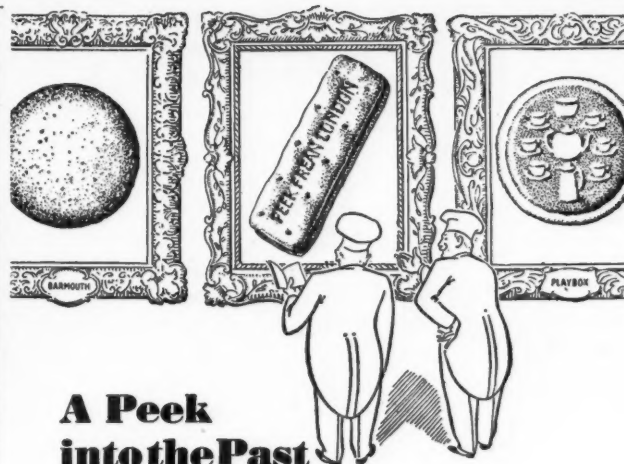
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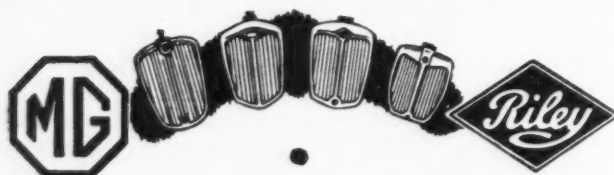
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